

**MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF BURNTWOOD TOWN COUNCIL
HELD IN THE MAIN HALL AT BURNTWOOD MEMORIAL INSTITUTE, RUGELEY ROAD,
BURNTWOOD ON WEDNESDAY 16 MARCH 2022 COMMENCING AT 6.00 PM**

PRESENT

Councillor Evans [in the Chair]

Councillors Birch, Bishop, Bullock, D Ennis, L Ennis, Flanagan, Greensill, Ho, Norman, R Place, Taylor, Willis-Croft and Woodward

In attendance

S Lightfoot, Town Clerk

Ms J Minor, Deputy Clerk

Ms A James, Finance Officer

County Councillor Cox

County Councillor Wilcox

CURRENT SITUATION IN UKRAINE

Pastor Rod Lewis explained that he had been a missionary in Ukraine from 1989 to 2009 which had involved various work e.g. taking over medicines and incubators and he was broken hearted to see the current suffering. He stated that the "We Stand With Ukraine" event on Saturday 12 March was amazing and that he continues to pray for the people of Ukraine.

Councillor Woodward acknowledged Pastor Lewis's long-standing service to Burntwood and his connection to Ukraine. She explained that the easiest way to get help directly to those who are suffering in this humanitarian crisis is to donate via the Disasters Emergency Committee [go to dec.org.uk]. She stated that the Town Council together with partner organisations will be getting together in the near future to see what else Burntwood can do.

Councillor R Place stated that the current situation in Ukraine had touched all of us and also acknowledged Pastor Lewis's commitment to the community of Burntwood over a long period of time.

PUBLIC FORUM

No questions were raised by members of the public.

103. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Councillors Banevicius, Brown [Dispensation], Gittings, Kirkham, M Place and Westwood.

104. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST AND DISPENSATIONS

Councillor Evans declared an interest in any discussions concerning CASES as she is a trustee.

**105. NOTICE OF CASUAL VACANCY – COUNCILLOR THOMAS LOUGHBROUGH RUDD
[SUMMERFIELD AND ALL SAINTS WARD]**

Members formally noted that the Town Clerk had declared a casual vacancy on the Town Council on 24 January 2022 following the resignation of Mr Thomas Loughbrough Rudd.

106. SUMMERFIELD AND ALL SAINTS WARD: CO-OPTION TO FILL VACANCY FOR ONE MEMBER

The Chair asked Kathy Coe MBE if she still wished to be co-opted onto the Town Council and Mrs Coe confirmed that she still wished to be considered for the Summerfield and All Saints Ward.

Members noted that the vacancy had been advertised and that no notice requesting an election had been made.

Councillor Woodward explained to Members that only one application to be co-opted had been received. She stated that Mrs Coe has already made a huge contribution to our town and further afield and Councillor Birch explained that Mrs Coe has been a campaigner for womens safety through her role in Pathway.

It was proposed by Councillor Woodward, seconded by Councillor Birch and following a secret ballot [11 for, 3 abstentions] it was

RESOLVED That Kathy Coe MBE be co-opted onto the Town Council to represent the Summerfield and All Saints Ward.

The successful co-optee signed the Declaration of Acceptance of Office after which she took her place at the table.

It was noted that Mrs Coe would serve on the Overview and Scrutiny Committee.

Councillor Coe thanked the Town Council for the opportunity to serve the people of Burntwood. She explained that she had moved to Burntwood in 1971 and the area quickly became home as her three children were all born here. She stated that she was proud to have founded Pathway and following her retirement still works as a volunteer for them. She explained that her passion and life's work is supporting victims of abuse. There are many good things about Burntwood e.g. community spirit, amazing people and creative and life changing ideas from the voluntary sector. She stated that she loved the dementia friends work currently being undertaken, the need for mental health support after the pandemic, the need to continue to campaign about the state of the roads [too many potholes], the need for money to be invested in Sankey's Corner and the High Street, new infrastructure funding after the amount of new homes built and the need to encourage peer support on lots of different issues.

107. MINUTES

The Chair reminded Members that they were being asked to comment solely on the accuracy of the Minutes.

It was proposed by Councillor Woodward, seconded by Councillor D Ennis, and following a unanimous show of hands it was

RESOLVED That the Minutes of the Meeting of the Town Council held on 12 January 2022 [Minute Nos. 92-102] be received and where necessary approved and adopted.

108. CHAIR'S REPORT

The Chair explained that she had represented the Town Council at several functions recently, namely on 14 January she attended the tree planting at Stables Way [partnership working with Mercian Labels], on 08 February she attended Chase Terrace Academy to open their Safe Space initiative for students who are suffering from anxiety etc and she had an interesting conversation with students who have been trained to offer peer support to them and on 23 February she attended Burntwood Library and the launch of an exhibition on living with dementia in the town entitled "Through My Eyes". She stated that it was hoped that the Town Council would have a stall at the Burntwood Producers' Market on Sunday 10 April to highlight dementia. She stated that she also attended an event at Fulfen Primary School together with Councillor D Ennis to open the new library. Reading is such an enjoyed and important opportunity to trigger the imagination. It was also great to talk and be questioned by members of the school council who asked some very pertinent questions about the role of the Town Council. She also attended the "We Stand with Ukraine" event on Saturday 12 March.

Even though not to do with Burntwood, the Chair referred to the release of Nazanin Zaghari-Ratcliffe.

109. MEMBERS QUESTIONS

None received.

110. CALENDAR OF MEETINGS

Councillor Woodward noted that it is a complex exercise to co-ordinate the meetings to avoid as many of the inevitable clashes with other council's calendar and would like to place on record thanks to the Deputy Clerk for completing this with efficiency. Councillor R Place was grateful for early sight of the meeting calendar and was supportive of the meeting dates, however, he stated that Hammerwich Parish Council at their meeting later tonight would be discussing the start time of their meetings [currently 7.30pm and changing to 6pm] so some clashes would be inevitable.

It was proposed by Councillor Woodward, seconded by Councillor D Ennis, and following a unanimous show of hands it was

RESOLVED That the calendar of Meetings for 2022/23 be received and adopted.

111. UPDATE ON INCOME AND EXPENDITURE COMPARED TO BUDGET AND EARMARKING OF RESERVES AT YEAR END

The Finance Officer explained that the earmarked revenue reserves should be earmarked for specific projects and in reflection suggested that the Town Strategy [£79,752], Bus Shelters [£9,294], Street Lighting [£1,500] and Public Conveniences [£15,291] could be left in general reserves.

Councillor Greensill asked if organisations could clawback money if not spent. The Finance Officer explained that any unspent Neighbourhood Plan grant from Groundwork would need to be returned to them.

Councillor R Place referred to the fact that the Town Council has nearly £600,000 in reserves.

Councillor Woodward referred to Minute No. 83 [16 November 2021 Full Council] where the Council Budget for 2022-23 was discussed and explained that due to Covid-19 the Town Council was not able to move forward on projects however she confirmed that projects were now moving ahead for the benefit of Burntwood. The reserves would not be at the level they are at present if the projects had taken place.

It was proposed by Councillor Woodward, seconded by Councillor D Ennis, and following a unanimous show of hands it was

RESOLVED That the Budget Statement be endorsed, and the suggested earmarking of the underspend be approved.

112. BANKING FACILITIES

Councillor R Place explained that he was currently having problems logging on to Unity Trust Bank and was supportive of the recommendations.

It was proposed by Councillor Birch, seconded by Councillor D Ennis, and following a unanimous show of hands it was

RESOLVED That Councillor Paul Taylor be added to the Unity Trust Bank mandate to give extra capacity to authorising expenditure and monitoring spending, that the Finance Officer be instructed to open a suitable account with National Westminster, and the existing mandated Members be on that account's mandate, that a float of £10,000 be transferred to this account as an emergency operating reserve, and to replace all remaining cash systems with a contactless debit card and that the Town Clerk continue to monitor the effectiveness of Unity Trust with a view to closing the account in the future.

113. GRIT BINS

The Town Clerk explained that he had recently purchased six grit bins at a cost of £437.74 plus VAT and was in communication with Mary Lee from Staffordshire County Council with regard to the appropriate licences.

Councillor Woodward explained that grit bins had been on the Town Council agenda for some time and this project was now moving forward. She said that there are a lot of steep roads in Burntwood [particularly the Boney Hay & Central Ward] and felt that this was a positive thing for the Town. Should Members know of any other locations they need to advise the Town Clerk.

Councillor Flanagan said that he was delighted that Stables Way was being included on the list for a grit bin. It was noted that it was yet to be confirmed on the gritting schedule by Staffordshire County Council.

Councillor Birch stated that he had been campaigning for more grit bins for two and a half years.

114. DEMENTIA FRIENDLY PROJECT

The Town Clerk confirmed the Project had been identified as a priority for the Town Council and referred to Minute No. 52 – Dementia Friendly Town – Appointment of Experienced Advisor [23 February 2022 Community and Partnership Committee] and confirmed that he had hired an experienced advisor on a freelance temporary basis to guide the Town Council. A meeting had been held with the advisor to discuss actions/steps needed to move forward. He confirmed that a meeting of the Dementia Friends Working Group had been arranged for 23 March 2022 via Zoom. It was hoped that the Town Council would become “dementia friendly” in May 2022.

Councillor Evans confirmed that the “Through Our Eyes” exhibition had been launched in the Library on 23 February 2022 and it was hoped that the exhibition would move around the Town [e.g. Darwin Medical Practice – Greenwood House, Chase Terrace Academy and Erasmus Darwin Academy]. She confirmed that 1,500 knitted/crochet forget-me-nots had been made and it was hoped that the Town Council would have a stall at the Burntwood Producers’ Market on 10 April to further promote the dementia friendly project.

Councillor Woodward explained that the accreditation was not the end of the project but the start as it had been reported that one in fourteen people over the age of 65 has some form of dementia and would encourage all Councillors to visit the “Through Our Eyes” exhibition.

115. PLANNING AND DEVELOPMENT COMMITTEE – 18 JANUARY 2022 AND 15 FEBRUARY 2022

Councillor D Ennis referred to planning application 21/02031/FUL – Morrisons and explained that Members needed to keep lobbying to ensure the resurfacing of the island.

It was proposed by Councillor Birch, seconded by Councillor Norman, and following a unanimous show of hands it was

RESOLVED That the Minutes of the Meetings of the Planning and Development Committee held on 18 January 2022 [Minute Nos. 31-36] and 15 February 2022 [Minute Nos. 37-41] be approved as a correct record.

116. COMMUNITY AND PARTNERSHIPS COMMITTEE – 27 JANUARY 2022 AND 23 FEBRUARY 2022

It was proposed by Councillor D Ennis, seconded by Councillor L Ennis, and following a unanimous show of hands it was

RESOLVED That the Minutes of the Meetings of the Community and Partnerships Committee held on 27 January 2022 [Minute Nos. 32-46] and 23 February 2022 [Minute Nos. 47-55] be approved as a correct record.

117. OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE – 24 FEBRUARY 2022

It was proposed by Councillor Norman, seconded by Councillor Bishop, and following a unanimous show of hands it was

RESOLVED That the Minutes of the Meeting of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee held on 24 February 2022 [Minute Nos. 6-12] be approved as a correct record.

118. EXCLUSION OF THE PRESS AND PUBLIC

Councillor Evans moved that although there were no longer members of the public present the Council still needed to approve the exclusion of the press and public so the next agenda item could be treated as confidential.

RESOLVED That under the Public Bodies [Admissions of Meeting] Act 1960 [Section 2] [and as expended by Section 100 of the Local Government Act 1972], the press and public be excluded from the meeting for the following items of business on the grounds that they involve the likely disclosure of exempt information.

119. TOWN DEAL

See Confidential Minutes.

120. BETTER BURNTWOOD FUND

See Confidential Minutes.

[The Meeting closed at 7.32 pm]

Signed

Date